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ORGANIZATION OF THE SECRETARIAT OF THE UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND

CHAPTER I. NEW YORK HEADQUARTERS

Section C. Programme Group

The present section describes the current functions and organization of the Programme Group, which includes the Programme Division, the Evaluation Office and the International Child Development Centre, Florence, Italy.

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I. NEW YORK HEADQUARTERS

C. Programme Group

The Programme Group, which includes the Programme Division, the Evaluation Office and the International Child Development Centre at Florence, Italy, is coordinated by the Deputy Executive Director, Programmes.

Programme Division

General functions and responsibilities

The primary functions of the Programme Division are:

(a) To provide support to the Office of the Executive Director in the formulation of programme policy and the monitoring of its application;

(b) To develop programme guidelines and monitor their application;

(c) To provide support to field offices in the formulation, implementation, monitoring, evaluative analysis and adjustment process of country programmes;

(d) To ensure the acquisition, analysis, distribution and storage of programme-related information;

(e) To coordinate headquarters support for field offices;

(f) To provide substantive support for staff development and training in programme policy and procedures;

(g) To liaise with United Nations specialized agencies and other technical organizations in the development and application of programme policies and procedures;

(h) To finalize programme recommendations, policy reviews, reports and information notes for submission to the Executive Board.

Organization of the Division

The Programme Division was reorganized in 1990 into two major groups, the Field Operations Group and the Advisory Services Group, under the overall guidance of the Director. The Field Operations Group, under the supervision and coordination of the Associate Director, comprises the geographical sections, the Programme Statistics Section, the Programme Information Management Unit, the Emergency Programmes Section and the Central and Eastern Europe Section. The Advisory Services Group is organized into five sectoral clusters, the Bamako Initiative Management Unit and the Costs and Economics Unit. While the Advisory Services Group is under the direct supervision of

the Director, the coordination of its work is assisted by the Special Adviser on Programme Development.

Director's Office

This Office is responsible for the overall management of the Division and the overall development of policies and strategies. It provides general direction and guidance of the work of the Division, with particular responsibilities for the following:

(a) Providing overall guidance in the development of programme policies;

(b) Reviewing and initiating systems development, especially in the area of situation analysis, programme planning, development and implementation, as necessary;

(c) Undertaking planning for UNICEF as related to programmes, including preparation of the programme elements of the Executive Director's report and the medium-term plan, analysis and monitoring of the situation of children, preparation of annual planning levels, participation in the Budget Planning and Review Committee, etc.;

(d) Ensuring the application of UNICEF programme policies in the formulation of programme proposals and reviewing programme proposals for their final clearance, as well as initiating and overseeing global studies for submission to the Executive Board;

(e) Reflecting the views of field offices on policy, programme and operational matters as well as in inter-agency meetings and at different executive, management, operations and external relations meetings;

(f) Organizing the review of annual reports and preparing global overviews;

(g) Overseeing liaison with international, technical and specialized agencies;

(h) Administering global funds, such as the Interregional Fund for Programme Preparation, Promotion and Evaluation and components of the Programme Fund for the 1990s Goals, as well as the divisional budget.

Field Operations Group

Geographical sections. The geographical sections, which cover Africa, the Americas and the Caribbean, Asia and the Middle East and North Africa, serve as focal points for field contacts and follow-up actions with respect to the regions they serve and carry out the following major functions:

(a) Provide guidance to field offices on programme policy, strategies and operational procedures;

(b) Support and monitor programme preparation, implementation and review;

(c) Organize headquarters previews and reviews of programmes and annual reports and prepare regional overviews;

(d) Mobilize and coordinate headquarters and other support services required by field offices that are not available to them within the country or in the region;

(e) Serve as focal points for coordination between headquarters and field offices;

(f) Provide support to field offices and the Programme Funding Office in preparing for and securing supplementary funds;

(g) Handle emergencies jointly with the Emergency Programmes Section.

Programme Statistics Section. The Section is responsible for:

(a) Maintaining and updating statistical information on programmes; preparing reports on UNICEF-assisted programmes, primarily of a statistical nature; and ensuring consistency in statistical data used in different reports;

(b) Preparing, jointly with the Division of Financial Management, the UNICEF financial plan; and monitoring and reviewing it periodically;

(c) Gathering, analysing and interpreting data on programme expenditures to ensure adherence to ceilings; monitoring implementation rates; preparing planning levels for annual programme expenditures for individual countries; and advising on country ceilings for the current year's call-forwards;

(d) Ensuring that programme budget allotments and related documents are complete and inputing them into the headquarters computer system.

Programme Information Management Unit. The Unit is responsible for programme planning, policies and procedures that support effective programme implementation in the field. It also serves as the focal point for the operations and external relations groups in their development of procedures that affect programme planning and implementation. Other responsibilities of the Unit include:

(a) Developing and supporting a management/workplanning system for field offices that will enable the rational allocation of human and financial resources to achieve country programme objectives and developing methodologies for linking country office programmes with its staffing;

(b) Supporting the establishment of a programme information database capable of monitoring physical outputs, integrating all relevant data classes

of UNICEF work and developing programme management procedures for maintaining the database in each office;

(c) Assisting field offices to structure and manage their country programmes to ensure maximum efficiency and impact and to meet their programme information needs through ensuring that corporate systems reflect those needs.

Emergency Programmes Section. Under the supervision of the Director of Emergency Programmes, the Section serves as the headquarters focal point for all actions related to UNICEF contributions and participation in emergency situations and provides support on emergency programming. It also ensures coordination between the New York and Geneva Offices in emergency-related actions. Within the United Nations system, coordination is ensured by the newly created Department of Humanitarian Affairs, to which UNICEF has seconded staff. In coordination with other concerned headquarters divisions, the Unit ensures a rapid response to emergencies in programming, fund-raising and financial management, procurement and staffing.

Central and Eastern Europe Section. The Section was established in 1990 in response to the Executive Board's decision to undertake a limited range of specific child-related activities in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe which are undergoing significant political, social and economic transformation. The responsibilities of the Section include collecting data, undertaking analytical studies and supporting technical workshops and the publication of materials regarding the impact on children and women of the changing situation in the region; responding to specific requests to provide technical support to re-examine policies for child survival, protection and development during this period of transition; and responding on an exceptional basis to requests for limited emergency assistance within normal UNICEF practices.

Advisory Services Group

Advisory clusters and sections serve as focal points for their respective disciplines. The four principal sectoral clusters include: (a) health (with specialists in primary health care (PHC), safe motherhood, child survival and development (CSD), expanded programme on immunization/control of diarrhoeal diseases/acute respiratory infections and acquired immune deficiency syndrome; (b) nutrition (including micronutrients, breast-feeding and household food security); (c) water supply and sanitation; and (d) basic education. The fifth is an intersectoral cluster grouping of the following sections: urban and children in especially difficult circumstances; development programmes for women; environment; programme communications and social mobilization; statistics and information base; and programme research, publications and library. The Advisory Services Group also includes the Bamako Initiative Management Unit and the Cost and Economic Unit under the direct supervision of the Director.

Each cluster comprises a small staff of specialists in related disciplines who follow up on global developments and interests with

specialized agencies and other multilateral and bilateral organizations, as well as non-governmental organizations. They also have the principal function of assisting in the development of programme policies, monitoring the performance and progress in the achievement of the goals in their respective sector, liaising with concerned agencies and arranging for field support when required.

The functions of the advisory sections are:

(a) To report on new technical and scientific developments and to develop appropriate strategies for their application;

(b) To assist in policy development and review, in consultation with other sections in the division and concerned specialized agencies;

(c) To participate in programme reviews and to prepare reports and position papers in the field of their functional specialization for the Executive Board;

(d) To mobilize advisory services in the fields of their specialization, to prepare case-studies, reports and other documentation concerned with the assessment of programme experiences and to contribute to the advisory support of the programme;

(e) To support field offices in helping countries to improve the statistical and information base for planning and programming needs, and for the preparation of a statistical profile of the world's children;

(f) To serve as focal points in developing monitoring systems and global monitoring of progress in the achievement of goals;

(g) To undertake advocacy activities and represent UNICEF in international discussions;

(h) To serve as focal points in programme advisory support networks of concerned programme officers in UNICEF regional and country offices and as links to other professional specialists and specialized agencies and organizations outside UNICEF by sharing recent developments in methods and approaches in their substantive fields that would improve programme design or implementation and by providing support in programme development, implementation and evaluative assessments;

(i) To provide back-up support to specialists and consultants in the field and assist in their recruitment and in-service training;

(j) To assist in field studies and applied research work undertaken to define the situation of children;

(k) To participate in selected programme preparation activities at the country level, including prospective appraisals of programmes and feasibility analysis;

(l) To participate in joint periodic reviews with staff of regional and country offices, responsible government officials and members of other participating agencies to assess programme effectiveness and impact and to identify lessons from programme experiences.

Bamako Initiative Management Unit. The Unit supports the development and management of UNICEF-assisted programmes for strengthening maternal and child health/PHC, with a main focus on sub-Saharan Africa, within the framework of the Bamako Initiative - a major strategy for reviving, strengthening and extending basic health care services that have deteriorated in the prolonged economic crisis of sub-Saharan Africa, particularly at the district level and below.

The Unit is responsible for working with countries to meet the key challenge of making better use of existing resources for health and mobilizing additional resources to improve and expand services, thus also meeting the needs of those still without access to basic health care. A major responsibility of the Unit is to ensure people's greater participation and control since local ownership makes service more effective and more appropriate to local conditions, with the finances generated being managed by the communities themselves.

The Unit principally supports countries in their programme preparation and initial implementation. It is also responsible for the preparation and production of advocacy materials and publications, involving coordination at the international level; support to fund-raising and information exchange; training for both programme development and capacity-building; involvement in situation analyses and operations research and studies; and technical support in health financing, strengthening health management, essential drugs, community participation and management.

Costs and Economics Unit. The Unit supports UNICEF headquarters and field offices in technical areas of work on costs and financing related to the needs and services of children and women and aims to strengthen the capacity of the organization to address economic aspects of its global and country-level activities. The work of the Unit is closely linked with that of other units concerned with economics issues. The principal areas of focus for the work of the Unit are: (a) assessments of costs and identification of financing sources for meeting the goals for the 1990s, in the context of national programmes of action; (b) technical support to headquarters advisory clusters and geographical sections, and to regional and country offices in the fields of economics and options appraisal; (c) inter-agency activities in the areas of costs and economics; and (d) strengthening of UNICEF technical and organizational capacity in the field of economics, particularly through training and information dissemination.

Evaluation Office

General functions and responsibilities

The Evaluation Office reports to the Deputy Executive Director, Programmes. The Office liaises closely with the Planning and Coordination Office, the Office of Information Resources Management, specialists and geographical sections and advisory clusters in the Programme Division.

The responsibilities of the Office are:

(a) To develop systems and guidelines for programme/project monitoring and evaluation;

(b) To review and comment on field evaluation proposals;

(c) To develop and strengthen evaluative capacities at regional and country levels;

(d) To collaborate with other United Nations agencies and international assistance bodies in adopting a more uniform system of evaluation;

(e) To provide support to field evaluative activities, in close collaboration with the Office of Internal Audit and Programme Division, and to conduct joint evaluations with field offices, concerned Governments and donor agencies;

(f) To initiate thematic and sectoral evaluations where lessons can be learned globally;

(g) To conduct rapid assessments of specific programmes to learn the process involved, factors that determine success or failure, programme strengths and weaknesses, etc.;

(h) To feed back results of evaluations to the field, management and planning process;

(i) To coordinate the preparation and maintenance of monitoring and evaluation manuals;

(j) To conduct and supervise, when required, research and studies leading to policy formulation and modification, in consultation with the relevant sections and policy specialists;

(k) To brief the Executive Director, Deputy Executive Directors and executive staff every three months on the salient features of the latest evaluations received from field offices to enhance feedback and to improve the decision-making process.

International Child Development Centre, Florence

The International Child Development Centre was established in 1988 at Florence, Italy, to strengthen the capacity of UNICEF and its cooperating institutions to respond to the evolving needs of children and to promote an emerging new global ethic for caring for children. The Centre is headed by a Director, who is assisted by a Deputy Director. The Deputy Director is responsible for coordinating the programme for national capacity-building for CSD and for the documentation unit. The other major programme areas - economic policies and the mobilization of resources for children, the rights of the child and the needs of the urban child - are each headed by a senior programme officer, one of whom also serves as coordinator of the Centre's training activities.

The Centre provides a forum for international professional exchange of experiences and undertakes and promotes policy analysis, applied research and field experimentation, as well as advocacy of innovative strategies and dissemination of ideas towards the goals of child survival, development and protection. It also provides special training opportunities for UNICEF staff, concerned government officials and staff of other institutions and organizations with which UNICEF cooperates, including National Committees for UNICEF.

The agenda of the Centre addresses various aspects of children's physical, mental, social and moral development, emphasizing the development, protection and rights of children.

The Centre's activities are complementary to the ongoing activities and evolving policy concerns of UNICEF. It works closely with headquarters, regional and country offices and with other institutions concerned with the well-being of children.

The four major programme areas are as follows:

(a) National capacity-building for CSD, which aims to assist developing countries, focusing initially on several sub-Saharan African countries, to strengthen their national capacities to ensure the sustainability and expansion of ongoing CSD activities;

(b) Economic policies and mobilization of resources for children, which aims to strengthen UNICEF efforts to document the impact of economic policies on children, women and other vulnerable groups and to formulate appropriate policies for preserving and mobilizing financial resources for human development strategies to assist those groups. It has focused on three major projects: structural adjustment policies in sub-Saharan Africa; financing social services; and child poverty and deprivation in industrialized countries;

(c) The rights of the child, which focuses on policy analysis and development for UNICEF and its cooperating institutions in the area of child rights, particularly in the area of implementation strategies and mechanisms;

(d) Needs of the urban child, which seeks to identify, assess and advocate sustainable strategies that would: (i) prevent the neglect, abuse, exploitation and abandonment of children living in low-income, high-risk urban settings; and (ii) promote family and community-based approaches to child care, protection and development in these especially difficult urban circumstances.

The Centre plays a catalytic role in generating ideas and research findings that improve the quality of life for children. On a very selective basis, the Centre cooperates with UNICEF country offices to analyse and test new ideas in actual field conditions.

The Centre's training activities are designed to help update knowledge on priority subjects and to strengthen the policy analysis and problem-solving capacities of the staff of both UNICEF and cooperating institutions.